



# City of Seattle 2004 Families & Education Levy Action Strategy Prioritization



City of Seattle

## OVERVIEW OF THE CAC'S RECOMMENDED AND PRIORITIZED ACTION STRATEGIES

### There Should be Integrated and Comprehensive Systems

As charged by the Levy Oversight Committee, the Citizens Advisory Committee developed and utilized Criteria for prioritizing Action Strategies within each of the Levy's five Investment Areas: Early Learning, Support for Middle and High School Age Youth, Out-of-School Time, Student Health Services, and Family Involvement.

The prioritized Action Strategies presented on the following pages are brought forward by the CAC as part of a cohesive strategy. In order to make a significant difference for children and families, individual Action Strategies should not be considered and funded in isolation. The CAC strongly recommends the top-ranked Action Strategies be implemented as components of an integrated system meeting the whole needs of the whole child and family.

The CAC further recommends that many Action Strategies be implemented via one or more of the Major Initiatives described in the following section. Linkages between Action Strategies and Major Initiatives on the following pages are shown using these symbols:



*Neighborhood-Based Early Learning Network Initiative*



*Community Partnerships for Student Success*



*Comprehensive Student Health Services Initiative*

The Major Initiatives are not the only way in which the Action Strategies should be implemented, and the Levy package must have enough flexibility to continue programs that have demonstrated success.

The CAC acknowledges that additional staff work will be required to develop and cost the prioritized Action Strategies, and to integrate them with current practices.

### Cultural Relevancy is Critical

The CAC firmly recommends that Levy-funded programs be broadly inclusive and culturally relevant. This theme of cultural relevancy should be seen as running through all prioritized Action Strategies (and Major Initiatives), even where it is not explicitly stated.



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## **EARLY LEARNING INVESTMENT AREA**

**Vision** Every child is an eager, confident learner, ready for school. Children and families have the resources and supports they need to achieve social, emotional, and cognitive success. Schools, in partnership with families and communities, are ready to meet the diverse needs of each child.

**Goal** Increase school readiness by developing better, higher quality programs and providing greater access to those programs – particularly for low-income families and those whose home language is not English.

### **Overarching Recommendations**

- A cohesive strategy: dollars must be invested in all top-ranked Action Strategies to create a coherent approach that achieves the desired results. This should not be seen as a list of things to fund, but rather, as a package of strategies which, if funded, will make a significant difference for children and families. Strategies should be bundled, to be building blocks toward a more effective early learning system for all children and families.
- More funding is needed to effectively ensure that all children will be ready for Kindergarten.
- Investments must be made early, when they are most effective.
- If well-trained teachers are desired in the early learning field, there need to be adequate professional development degree programs available. Requirements can't be made if there are large gaps in the system, such as the current lack of early learning professional development programs in Seattle colleges.
- Adequate technical assistance and resources must be available to help providers meet higher standards.
- Early learning should be an equal partnership between parents, ECE providers and schools.

## Action Strategies



- Increase access for low-income families to higher quality, more educational child care **(1)**



- Expand the number of current early childhood education (ECE) programs with stimulating learning environments and skilled ECE teachers through: support for programs to get accredited and licensed with special attention to reducing barriers to licensing for immigrant and refugee populations; provision of curriculum trainings (including literacy preparation, social and emotional skills) and classroom materials; professional development; on-site mentoring; cash incentives for programs to meet higher standards; and enhanced teacher compensation. **(2)**

- **CAC Comments:** Cultural relevancy is a key feature of expanding the number of programs available and in the training provided.



- Offer programs that teach parents (especially new parents) how to prepare children for preschool and Kindergarten (Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Home Visitor Program, hospital-based outreach programs) **(3)**



- Promote collaboration of equal partners by providing release time for early childhood, kindergarten and elementary teachers to visit each others sites. Provide mutual learning opportunities for parents, teachers and ECE staff about how to get all children ready for school and schools ready for all children. **(3)**



- Offer screenings at ECE programs for prevention and early identification, diagnosis and treatment for developmental or health issues (via community clinics, nurse consultation team, use of EPSDT, etc.). Ensure kids have access to immunizations. **(5)**



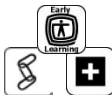
- Expand access to child care in evenings, early mornings, weekends **(6)**



- Stabilize workforce in ECE by providing wage and benefit compensation program (compensation and benefits grants) – goes with Action Strategy listed above which seeks to “expand the number of current ECE programs...” **(7)**



- Establish new, or expand existing, preschool programs in schools or communities – new services would be both full and/or part-time **(8)**



- Provide family support and linkage to services, including parent education, consumer education on the importance of early education, and how to choose quality child care particularly for parents whose first language is not English **(9)**

- **CAC Comments:** It is assumed that family support services and linkages are addressed in the Family Support Investment Area action strategies and covered in the overarching goals for the Early Learning Investment Area goals.



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### SUPPORT FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL AGE YOUTH INVESTMENT AREA


**Vision** In 2012, families, communities and schools will be genuine partners; and every middle and high school youth will feel positively connected to their school and community. Young people will be empowered and engaged to lead and fulfill their own future and contribute to our communities.

#### Support for High Risk High School Age Youth


The CAC recommends that the Levy Oversight Committee place an important priority on meeting the needs of high-risk high school age youth by funding the top three Action Strategies identified by the Citizens Advisory Committee in the Support for Middle and High School Age Youth Investment Area. In implementing these prioritized action strategies, consideration must be given to ensure that populations of youth who are not succeeding in school be targeted for support, including immigrant and refugee youth and other youth of color. Parent and family involvement must be incorporated into service delivery models with special consideration for families whose home language is other than English. We consider these implementation principles an integral part of our recommendation.

#### Action Strategies


- Develop college prep, job and life skills through practical experience such as service learning, internship, or employment programs and activities that connect youth to their cultural heritage and support community attachment **(1)**
  - **CAC Comments:** The CAC assumed that employment and internships were included as part of this strategy.

-  • Provide coordinated case management for youth with significant needs **(2)**

- Develop in- and out-of-school time opportunities for leadership and recognition **(3)**

-  • Increase time teachers spend on teacher/parent interaction. Link with *Parent Education*, below. **(4)**

- Staff training in courageous conversations, anti-racism, -classism, -sexism **(5)**

-  • Parent education, especially for parents of adolescents that are unfamiliar with systems (such as schools and the juvenile justice system) **(6)**

-  • Develop support groups for youth, parents and caregivers – Inclusive in other models **(7)**

-  • Encourage the consistent involvement of caring adults as mentors for youth **(8)**



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## **OUT OF SCHOOL TIME INVESTMENT AREA**










**Vision** Out-of-School Time programs will engage all children and youth in high quality, culturally relevant and inclusive activities that connect them to caring adults, families and neighborhoods; build on and develop assets; and address their needs holistically. Involvement in these programs will lead to lifelong learning and participatory, active citizenship.

**Goal** Increase access to and improve the quality of out-of-school time programs.

### **Overarching Recommendations**

- Professional development, technical assistance and on-site training should be integrated across all Action Strategies.
- Our five Action Strategies can be further integrated – we encourage systemic integration across all categories as well (integration with Early Learning, Support for Middle School Age Youth, Out of School Time, Student Health Services, Family Involvement)
- Need for holistic family support model for parents and children, combining language and culture focus/parent support and OST programs for bilingual families.
- Look at learning research (Heckman, Miller, etc.). Length of time in school is critical. What are things that make school attractive and help engage children?
  - Provide programs
  - Provide financial assistance/subsidies, etc.
  - Family activities
- Out-of-School Time Action Strategies link to Family Involvement and Support for Middle and High School Age Youth: linkages and partnership should be required in grants.

## Action Strategies

-  • Support and increase availability/slots in structured OST programs in school and community settings (licensed school-age care in schools and community settings; culturally-specific programs; After School Activities Program (ASAP); Community Learning Centers; Parks programs, etc.). Includes professional development/technical assistance/on-site support **(1)**
-  • Provide financial assistance for low-income/working families (subsidies, scholarships, sliding scale, fee waivers, etc.); and offer free and low cost opportunities to access high quality school- and community-based programs (i.e. ASAP, Community Learning Centers, etc.). Includes professional development/technical assistance/on-site support. **(1)**
-  • Develop parent/extended family/community component of OST programs (classes, activities, linkages, and services for family and community members; connect parents, family and community members with schools; help parents support student learning; establish parent/community advisory boards) Includes professional development/technical assistance/on-site support **(3)**
-  • Provide operational support for culturally-specific programs (for immigrant, refugee, and homeless children and youth). Includes professional development/technical assistance/on-site support. **(4)**
-   • Help children/youth and parents access programs and services; encourage community organizations and service providers to create a seamless integration of services (also addresses Student Health Services) Includes professional development/technical assistance/on-site support **(5)**
- Increase compensation of OST teachers/providers (wage ladder, wage increases or bonuses linked to professional development and longevity) **(6)**
- Provide employment opportunities for upper middle school (ages 13-14) and high school age youth (pre-employment skills, career awareness, work skills, employment, etc.) **(7)**
- Provide structured opportunities for service learning and community service that provides experiential learning opportunities **(8)**
-  • Professional development, training, technical assistance, and on-site support **(8)**
  - **CAC Comments:** Professional development needs to be emphasized throughout the Levy recommendations, as an overarching element.
-  • Higher education for OST staff (TEACH program, community college, financial incentives/assistance to earn credentials [AA degrees]) **(0)**
-  • Provide mentorships **(0)**

## **Recommended Content Areas for Professional Development, Training and Technical Assistance (not an exhaustive list):**

- Provide training, technical assistance, and support to help programs and OST staff be culturally competent, anti-bias, and address institutional racism.
- Provide training, technical assistance, and support to help programs and OST staff to align activities to reinforce student learning standards and support academic success (tie learning back to the school day)
- Provide training, technical support and incentives to help licensed OST program achieve national accreditation standards.
- Recruit and train staff who are reflective of the community and demonstrate cultural competence/anti-bias.
- Provide technical support on sustainability (licensing to qualify to receive subsidies, resource development, grant writing, etc.)
- Implement best practices and asset-based programming.

## **Recommended Expectations for Seattle Public Schools (would be part of the Levy's Accountability Framework):**

- Provide schools with training and assistance on how to work effectively with OST programs and community providers.
- Provide information and assistance to providers on how to align programs to support learning standards/reinforce curriculum, etc.
- As appropriate, provide information on student academic and non-academic needs; provide a venue for providers to inform the school on student academic and non-academic needs.
- Partner with OST providers
- Track and report appropriate student indicators (attendance, discipline, test results, GPA, high school graduation, etc.)
- Provide training opportunities for OST staff, including joint training opportunities for school and OST staff
- Train school staff on developmental assets approach and experiential learning (and the role that OST plays in learning)
- Continue and expand anti-racism training (Courageous Conversations) to reach all schools and staff
- Include OST in school transformation plans

- Open schools to community providers and family and community members with minimal expense (when possible, free) or hassle

### **Recommended Expectations of All OST Providers Funded Through the Levy:**

- Align programs and activities to support student learning and academic success
- Align programs and activities to support whole child/youth development and acquisition of developmental assets
- Provide tutoring and homework completion assistance as appropriate
- Meet OST quality guidelines, providing activities that are developmentally appropriate and in line with best practices
- Pursue training and support to provide culturally competent and anti-bias activities and services
- Take advantage of training opportunities
- Take advantage of opportunities to share information
- Partner with schools
- Partner with other community providers
- Help families in the transition of young children from home and early learning programs into kindergarten and out-of-school time programs (many licensed care providers serve children birth to 12 years)
- Work with the City and Seattle Public Schools on evaluation; be committed to demonstrating and reporting outcomes and indicators





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## STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES INVESTMENT AREA

**Vision** All children have access to comprehensive health services – inclusive of curative and preventative health services – that will help them achieve physical and mental health and avoid high-risk behaviors. These services, along with community and school district resources, are part of a coordinated, sustainable system supporting children's healthy development and include the eight components established by the Center for Disease Control (CDC): Health education, physical education, health services, nutrition services, health promotion for staff, counseling and psychological services, healthy school environment and parent/community involvement.

### Action Strategies

-  • Provide early physical and mental health assessment, preventative and curative treatment (including substance abuse and tobacco use prevention, sexual and reproductive health.) Include services to preschool and elementary grades. **(1)**
-  • Fund School Based Health Centers (SBHC) in all comprehensive high schools; and in middle schools based on need **(2)**
-  • Comprehensive health services and coordination to preschool through elementary grades: fund a planning process and subsequent pilot that would increase comprehensive services to pre-K through elementary **(3)**
-   • Provide K-12 Health Education as an integral part of the service delivery system (interface with OST)
-  • Provide trained medical and mental health interpreters for English as a Second Language students with cultural relevancy training as an integral part of providing quality health services. **(5)**
  - **CAC Comments:** Language and cultural relevancy training needs to be infused in medical and mental health interpreters – these are integral to providing quality health services.
-   • Provide families with referrals to needed services and support **(6)**
-  • Provide mentoring programs that build one-on-one support for middle school students (interface with Support for Middle and High School Age Youth) **(7)**
-  • Provide after-school and weekend access to community-based services **(8)**
-  • Provide effective mechanisms for care coordination and case management among professional disciplines (interface with Support for Middle and High School Age Youth). **(9)**



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## FAMILY INVOLVEMENT INVESTMENT AREA

**Vision** In 2012 there are equal, supportive and genuine partnerships between families, schools, and the community, so that all children will succeed. Schools will recognize and be responsive to the culture, needs and assets of families.

### Action Strategies

-   • Provide culturally relevant family support services and community resources in schools and communities. **(1)** Examples:
  - Family Support Workers
  - Family Centers
  - Adult education in school buildings and in the community
-  • Provide culturally relevant training and support for parents and staff in order to create authentic partnerships. **(2)**
-  • Develop ongoing, communication strategies between the School District, families, schools and communities that are culturally appropriate and allow for two-way communication (i.e. radio, newspapers, ethnic/ neighborhood papers, etc.) **(3)** Examples:
  - Parent-Teacher conferences evenings/Saturdays
  - Family dinners
  - Phone hot-line for parents
-  • Implement strategies to coordinate culturally relevant community resources and services for families. **(4)** Examples:
  - Create a centralized Parent Involvement office to coordinate strategies
  - Create a School District-wide policy and guiding principles related to partnership with families